

Dunlapville Bridge
Dunlapville
Union Co.
Indiana

HAER No. IN-31

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN AND HISTORICAL DATA

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Historic American Engineering Record
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington D.C. 20240

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HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

Dunlapville Covered Bridge

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Location:	Spanning the east fork of Whitewater River south of Dunlapville, Indiana. UTM: 16.672820.4383550 Quad: Fairfield, Indiana
Date of Construction:	1870
Present Owner:	
Significance:	Typical example of the patented Burr arched truss design used in covered bridge construction throughout Indiana.
Historians:	Donald Sackheim Robert Rosenberg

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The Dunlapsville Covered Bridge, spanning the east fork of the Whitewater River approximately 4.5 miles southwest of Liberty, is a typical example of the patented Burr arched truss used in bridge construction throughout Indiana. Built in 1870, the Dunlapsville Bridge is representative of the 70 surviving Burr arched bridges surviving in Indiana. It combines a multiple king post--a device used in house construction for hundreds of years--with the development patented by Theodore Burr, an arch which serves to absorb an appreciable amount of the load from the king post truss.

Theodore Burr, the inventor of the system which bears his name, was born the son of a millwright in Torrington, Connecticut in 1771. Theodore received formal schooling and later followed in his father's footsteps, serving his apprenticeship in the building trades. Moving to what was then the wilderness of Western New York state, he built a grist and saw mill on the banks of the Chenango River near Oxford and in 1800 he erected his first bridge in order to serve his customers from both sides of the river.

The first bridge was a simple stringer, but it served to awaken his interest in bridge-building and three years later, in 1804, he received his first patent for a bridge.

The Dunlapsville Covered Bridge, erected by Archibald M. Kennedy in 1870, is a typical example of the patented Burr truss. The two span 330 foot long structure is made up of 28 bays or panels, each composed of 10 x 12 posts and 8 x 10 diagonal bracings spaced approximately 9' 3" on center. The four 9 x 14 arches, two on each side of the roadbed, were probably made of laminated lumber, since the forests of Indiana which might have supplied a single timber had been cleared of their first growth by the 1870's. The height from peak to roadbed is 21 feet and the width of the roadbed is 16' 8".

Dunlapsville Covered Bridge

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